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BI-MONTHLY

REPORT

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FCC Considering Instant Novice Operation

The FCC staff is finishing up their work on the proposal to have an "Instant Novice" license. Frederick G. Hambrecht, KJ4JE (Advanced) of Jamestown, Tennessee, filed a Petition for Rulemaking on April 27, 1987, seeking to authorize immediate operating privileges to new Novice licensees. At present, applicants that complete their Novice requirements must wait until license arrival to get on-the-air. Comments closed June 20th on the Hambrecht petition. Strangely, this petition has not received very wide publicity.

The basic problem in adopting such a proposal is that the new Novice does not have an authorized call sign with which to operate, ...nor has the FCC made a determination regarding the suitability of the applicant to be an amateur.

The Commission has a procedure whereby every amateur operator application is screened against the FCC's database in Washington. Gettysburg transmits the weekly Form 610 amateur radio operator application data via modem to Washington for this comparison. Those applicants having sanctions against them - or with differing application data - are "sifted" out and denied amateur operator licenses. To allow a new Novice to immediately get on-the-air would seemingly by-pass this procedure.

One "instant Novice" possibility being considered by the FCC is allowing new operators to use the call sign (with an identifying suffix) of one of the volunteer examiners administering the Novice examination. The FCC would not confirm that they indeed would be issuing a Notice of Proposed Rule Making on RM-5924. "The real option," Ray Kowalski, Chief of the FCC's Special Service Division, "is whether to do it or not."

"There are legal obstacles (to authorizing amateur radio operation without a license in hand) in that the Commission is required to make a public interest finding. No one can operate without a license. That is a provision of the Communications Act. There are legal constructs around various ways to do that."

Kowalski cryptically added, "That is why the whole petition has not been dismissed out-of-hand because there are ways of looking at things that allows what looks like instant licensing to take place ...when in fact you are doing something slightly different. What we are trying to do is to see if any of those ways of looking at things are available in this situation."

"The first thing that you have to consider is that you can't operate without a

license ...and you can't get a license without the Commission making a public interest finding in regard to an application that is filed to get a license. That is the way the structure is set up. This is probably the reason that instant amateur operation has never been approved before."

"The Communications Act contemplates that people will file licenses, the Commission will review them, grant the licenses, send it to them and then they can go on-the-air. The ways around it require you to find or come up with a mechanism which expedites that process. That is the thrust of the issue surrounding "Instant Novice" licensing.

Ray Kowalski said that his staff was wrapping up the matter and "we should have something going forward within a few weeks."

It might be that the FCC will allow new Novices to operate temporarily under the authority of another already approved amateur license. We will have to wait and see.

FCC TO RELEASE NEW §PART 97...

"The other thing that we are currently working on," Ray said, "is an overall §Part 97 effort to find those rules that are redundant ... rules that really ought to be elsewhereduplicate rules that need elimination ...and the creation of some rule sections for emerging areas that don't have any rules yet — create some "buckets" if you will."

"There will be some major differences that will come out of it ...some important actions that will be contained in that project. The new §Part 97 is a couple of months off yet. We are finishing up our work on it at the staff level — then it starts going through the reviewing processes. I am looking at a final draft right now ...it is half-an-inch thick."

ON PRB-3, HAM CALL SIGNS OF CHOICE....

"We are finishing up work on PRB-3 as well." PRB-3 (for Private Radio Bureau Third Inquiry) looks toward privatizing the issuance of amateur call signs of choice. "No one should try to predict the outcome of that

one," he cautioned.

I asked Ray when we would be seeing something on PRB-3... "Not for several weeks, I'd guess," he said, "mostly because it takes a while to get things through the agency. Those are the three major issues we are working on right now ...although at any given time there are probably two dozen smaller projects in the house."

(Capsule version of phone call, 11/13/87)

FCC DENIES HAM CLASS RESTRUCTURING...

The FCC has denied and dismissed a Petition for Rulemaking filed by Sheffield P. Wilds, W4GVD, of Pineola, North Carolina, proposing to reduce the number of amateur license classes from five to two.

Wilds suggested that the 1950's vintage Class "A" and Class "B" license classes be re-established with the Novice and Technician class being combined into Class "A" and the General/Advanced/Extra Class becoming Class "B".

In denying the petition, the FCC said that they had considered restructuring the amateur service before and no new issues were raised.

USSR/CANADA - TRANSPOLAR SKI-TREK....

Canada's Department of Communications (similar to our FCC) has announced the finalization of an amateur third party and reciprocal operating agreement between Canada and the Soviet Union. The purpose of these agreements is to facilitate amateur radio communications in support of a joint USSR/Canadian ski expedition which will cross the North Pole from Severnaya Zemlya to Cape Columbia on Ellesmere Island beginning in February 1988.

The six Canadian skiers, from whom four will finally be chosen, have just returned from a rigorous training period with the USSR team in the Tien Shan mountains of Soviet Central Asia.

The next training exercise will take place in the Canadian Eastern Arctic in the

latter part of this month. The entire USSR group will be participating. At that time the Canadian amateur radio system will begin handling communications between skiers in the field and the main base station in the Canadian North. It will also keep in touch with the main USSR amateur station near Moscow.

Following an excellent response from many Canadian amateurs, well-known Canadian DXer and contestor, Barry Garratt, VE3CDX has assembled an impressive team of Canadian amateur operators who will be operating the main base station and other parts of the ski-trek amateur radio network.

This important operating activity represents one of the best opportunities to bring amateur radio before the world media and the public as well as demonstrating its full potential. For this reason, as well as the support of an important scientific expedition, it has already been hailed by amateur radio societies around the world. The IARU (International Amateur Radio Union) representing 125 member countries has offered its support and endorsement.

1988 AMATEUR OPERATOR EXAM FEES....

The FCC has increased the maximum allowable reimbursement fee for an amateur examinee from \$4.37 to \$4.56 effective January 1, 1987. This amount is based upon a 4.3% increase in the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index between September 1986 and September 1987. The W5YI-VEC program has adopted a \$4.55 fee for 1988.

Volunteer Examiners and their coordinating VEC's may charge examinees for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in preparing, processing or administering examinations for Technician, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra operator examinations. The amount reimbursed may not exceed the maximum allowable fee. (No fees may be assessed for administering the Novice examinations.)

Where the VE's and VEC's both desire reimbursement, they jointly decide upon a fair distribution of the fee. The ARRL, which also will be charging \$4.55, reimburses exact expenses, while the W5YI-VEC program shares

expense reimbursement with its volunteer examining teams.

Effective January 1, 1988, the W5YI-VE team share will be \$1.55 per examinee if nine or less applicants are examined - \$2.30 per examinee if ten or more applicants are examined. The W5YI-VEC expense reimbursement share will remain the same as it has the past two years, i.e. \$3.00 if nine or less applicants, \$2.25 if ten or more.

SAN DIEGO CB'ER SENTENCED, FINED....

Carlo S. DiMaggio, a CB operator from San Diego, California, has been sentenced to a one year (suspended) prison sentence and placed on five years supervised probation for operating an unlawful 200-watt linear CB amplifier.

In addition, DiMaggio must pay a \$5,000 fine within one year, allow FCC personnel to conduct periodic inspections of his home without a search warrant and cooperate with FCC investigators, telephone company employees and other technical personnel to resolve incidents of harmful interference to electronic devices in his neighbors' homes.

The San Diego FCC office had received over 50 complaints of radio interference from DiMaggio's neighbors who alleged the interference was caused by his CB station. The FCC had previously directed DiMaggio to eliminate the interference and remove any linear amplifier from his CB station.

A subsequent letter assessed DiMaggio with a \$300 fine. When all letters to him were ignored, DiMaggio was finally arrested by the U.S. Marshal's Service at his home.

AMATEUR'S FATHER FINED \$1,000!

The San Juan (Puerto Rico) office of the FCC has fined Mr. Angel L. Santiago of Barceloneta, \$1,000 for operating an amateur radio station without a license.

Santiago, whose own amateur license was revoked more than five years ago, was operating his son's amateur station and using his son's call sign.

Radio Shack's internal October 1987 "Merchandising Newsletter" (which goes to all their stores) says "There is new interest and excitement in ham radio because of recent FCC rule changes." They mention the new Novice voice privileges ...Novice use of 220-MHz repeaters, Novice phone patching, packet radio - and the new instructional package Gordon West/WB6NOA and Fred Maia/W5YI put together for Radio Shack. (\$19.95)

They also add the following suggestion to their managers, "...if you are contacted by local amateur radio clubs, let them leave a phone number and/or some of their literature (about meetings, for example.) Clearly Radio Shack is interested in the amateur radio market. The November 4th ARRL Letter, the League's twice-a-month report, also tells about the Radio Shack Newsletter to its stores. ARRL didn't say who authored the package, however.

FCC RELEASES YEAR END STATISTICS....

John B. Johnston, W3BE, Chief of the FCC Personal Radio Branch, Washington, DC, released the following Fiscal Year-1987 figures on Amateur Radio growth and Novice/-VEC system testing to all Volunteer Examiner Coordinators last week. (The government's fiscal year ended September 30, 1987.) We thought you would be interested in seeing the statistics.

Basically they show that:

(1.) Novice Enhancement is definitely helping the ARS grow! In fact, Amateur Radio could have had less amateurs at year end without it! There were far more new Novices (22,319) than Novices that dropped out of ham radio (5,282).

(2.) On the other hand, there was a **10.97% increase** (over last year) in Advanced Class and a **77.16% increase** in Extra Class amateurs dropping out of the service.

(3.) Nearly 24,000 amateurs upgraded their license class during fiscal year 1987 - a 7% increase over FY-86.

(4.) Clearly, the ham radio "action" is at the Novice and Technician level! There are 14,958 more Novices and Techs than just two years ago. While the Novice/Tech level increased by 9,157 amateurs during FY-87, the General/Advanced/Extra Class census dropped by 38 amateurs!!!

(5.) New Novice amateurs are upgrading to the Technician level at unprecedented levels. More than half (56.12%) of all amateurs upgrading were Novices.

License Class:	Total Amateurs in Class	Increase Over Last Year:		Entered Hobby (at this level)		Upgrading to this Class + New hams		Left Hobby (Fail to Renew)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Novice	82,799	+3,672	+4.64%	22,319	+16.33%	-	-	5,282	+ 1.07%
Technician	91,633	+5,485	+6.36%	1,452	+24.85%	12,620	+30.96%	3,448	+25.66%
General	114,428	-2,436	-2.08%	411	-17.80%	5,372	-13.87%	3,801	+64.83%
Advanced	98,147	- 48	- .05%	119	- .08%	4,759	- 6.30%	2,052	+10.97%
Extra	43,214	+2,446	+6.00%	37	-24.49%	3,082	- 0.20%	636	+77.10%
TOTALS:	430,201	+9,119	+2.17%	24,338	+16.01%	25,833		15,219	+21.90

Lic. Class:	UPGRADING TO:		Advanced:	Extra Class:	TOTAL UPGRADES:	Increase % Over FY-1986:
	Technician:	General:				
Novice	11,168	2,035	133	29	13,365	+19.85%
Technician	-	2,926	730	31	3,687	- 4.51%
General	-	-	3,777	230	4,007	- 8.05%
Advanced	-	-	-	2,755	2,755	- 3.60%
TOTALS:	11,168	4,961	4,640	3,045	23,814	+ 7.14%

SEPTEMBER VE PROGRAM STATISTICS....

	September	1985	1986	1987
No. VEC's:		*65	*75	*59
No Testing Sessions:		241	277	306
	1985	1986	1987	
ARRL:	54.4%	46.6%	43.8%	
W5YI:	10.4%	24.2%	31.4%	
DeVRY:	6.6%	4.3%	6.2%	
CAVEC:	8.7%	7.2%	3.9%	
Others:	1.9%	17.7%	9.7%	
Year-to-Date Sessions:		2,350	2,760	3,228
No. Elements Admin.:		4,247	4,448	5,538
	1985	1986	1987	
ARRL:	56.3%	48.7%	52.8%	
W5YI:	8.9%	21.3%	23.1%	
CAVEC:	6.8%	4.0%	5.3%	
DeVRY:	4.8%	3.3%	2.7%	
Others:	23.2%	22.7%	16.1%	
Year-to-Date Elem. Adm.:		48,535	48,011	61,274
No. Applicants Tested:		2,846	3,058	3,342
	1985	1986	1987	
ARRL:	55.7%	50.8%	50.5%	
W5YI:	8.0%	19.3%	23.3%	
CAVEC:	6.4%	3.9%	4.8%	
DeVRY:	4.6%	2.9%	2.9%	
Others:	25.3%	23.1%	18.5%	
Year-to-Date Applic.:		31,976	32,973	38,227
Pass/Upgrade Rate, All:		61.3%	59.1%	62.3%
Pass/Upgrade Rate, W5YI:		55.4%	56.0%	58.8%
Applicants per Session:		11.8	11.0	10.9
Appl. per Session/W5YI:		6.7	7.5	8.5
No. Elements Per Appl./All:		1.49	1.49	1.65
No. Sessions Per VEC/All:		3.7	3.7	5.4

Administrative Errors by VE's/VEC's

Defective Applications:	1.2%	0.1%	0.5%
Late Filed Sessions:	3.3%	0.7%	1.6%
Defective Reports:	2.5%	1.1%	4.3%

* = The FCC considers ARRL, W5YI, and DeVry to be 13 VEC's each since VEC's are appointed on a regional basis. The 13 regions are: Call sign districts 1 through 0 plus: Alaska (11) and Caribbean (12) and Pacific Insular areas.(13)

[Source: FCC, Washington, D.C. 20554]

At the request of the Satellite Operators and Users Technical Committee, the FCC has extended the comment closing date on their proposal to require Automatic Transmitter Identification (General Docket No. 86-337) to January 5, 1988; Replies by: February 4th.

AMATEUR RADIO CALL SIGNS....

issued as of the first of November:

Radio District:	Gp."A" Extra	Gp."B" Adv. Tech/Gen.	Gp."C" Novice	Gp."D" Novice
0	WC0J	KE0RG	N0IQG	KB0BHU
1	NN1R	KC1GT	N1FHI	KA1RDM
2	WA2U	KE2DA	N2HRD	KB2EMW
3	NM3D	KD3FF	N3FVR	KA3SHB
4 (*)	AB4EJ	KK4ST	N4RLQ	KC4CCE
5 (*)	AA5DJ	KG5FC	N5LQT	KB5EOP
6 (*)	AA6FG	KJ6AJ	N6QVN	KB6UME
7	WG7Q	KF7EQ	N7KBH	KB7DAK
8	NZ8A	KE8OM	N8IXH	KB8DHW
9	NV9I	KE9HB	N9GZU	KA9ZOJ
N.Mariana I.	AH0E	AH0AC	KH0AI	WH0AAH
Guam	KH2G	AH2BR	KH2CZ	WH2ALF
Johnston Is.	AH3A	AH3AC	KH3AB	WH3AAC
Midway Is.		AH4AA	KH4AD	WH4AAF
Palmyra/Jarvis	AH5A			
Hawaii	(**)	AH6IP	NH6MP	WH6BVD
Kure Island			KH7AA	
Amer. Samoa	AH8C	AH8AD	KH8AE	WH8AAW
Wake Wilkes Peale		AH9AC	KH9AD	WH9AAH
Alaska	(**)	AL7JH	NL7LO	WL7BPP
Virgin Is.	KP2T	KP2BK	NP2CG	WP2AFS
Puerto Rico	(**)	KP4OL	WP4MM	WP4HPX

NOTES: * = All 2-by-1 format call signs have been assigned in the 4th, 5th and 6th radio districts. 2-by-2 format call signs from the AA-AL prefix block now being assigned to Extra Class amateurs.

** = All Group "A" (2-by-1) format call signs have been assigned in Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico. Group "B" (2-by-2) format call signs now being assigned Extra Class.

The U.S. 4th call district will be the first to run out of the 2X2 (Group "A") call signs, but it will be a long time before it happens! The AA-AK Group "A" prefix block can yield 6,084 Extra Class call signs. The first Group "A" AAX2 call signs were issued to District 4 Extra Class amateurs in March 1984. So far only 790 have been assigned ...about 18 per month. At that rate, it will be another 25 years before the 2-by-2's run out in District 4. (The AH and AL-by-2 blocks are assigned only to the Pacific and Alaska.) The current call sign assignment system (Docket 21135) was adopted by the FCC on March 2, 1978. It was this same rulemaking that also discontinued the issuance of secondary call signs and special event stations.

"NO CODE" PETITION FILED WITH THE FCC

Extra Class amateur, Ben B. Johnson, NYØO, of Washington, Iowa, has filed a Petition for Rulemaking with the Commission seeking to eliminate Element 1(A), the 5 words-per-minute Morse code test for the Novice and Technician Class licenses.

Johnson, who has been licensed nearly 20 years, argues that "...Novice Enhancement was a positive step but is not enough." He maintains that knowledge of the code does not keep the troublemakers off the air and "...eliminates a lot of potentially good communicators."

Johnson says the theory that the code will get through when all else fails is not a valid argument. "Very seldom, if ever, am I not within range of a two meter FM repeater. If I need to report a highway accident, I would much rather use voice than try to send a message via CW and hope the other operator can copy."

Referring to the reasoning "that if we eliminate the code, we will have so many operators that amateur radio will become like another Citizens Band," Johnson said "I don't believe it." He claims that the "amateur bands could easily support ten times as many operators as we have now and still not run out of frequency space. We are not restricted to 40 channels like the Citizens' Band, and the written tests are enough to ensure that a potential operator will operate within the amateur bands and conform to regulations."

"We have plenty of frequency space available in the VHF and UHF spectrum, plenty of commercially built equipment readily available, and many people who could make a valuable contribution to amateur radio, but don't due to the antiquated Morse code requirement." Johnson's petition was filed October 22, 1987.

IS IT TIME TO RECONSIDER "NO-CODE"?

It just might be. In responding to a "Discussion Paper" (basically the same as our Notice of Inquiry) members of the two largest ham groups in Canada have proposed an entry

level "Basic Certificate" for their entry level amateurs.

The joint comments of the Canadian Radio Relay League and the Canadian Amateur Radio Federation suggest a written examination covering basic electronic theory and circuits, receiving and transmitting systems, antennas and propagation, station setup and operation, interference prevention and regulations.

This is exactly what is now covered in our present Novice (and Technician) written Element 2 and 3(A) examinations. The CRRL and CARF suggested to their Department of Communications that there be no code requirements to "make the certificate attractive to computer buffs and others that view the Morse code as interesting but old fashioned."

The CRRL and CARF comments which carry a lot of weight in Canadian regulatory circles ask that holders of the code free entry level certificate allow the use of all frequencies and modes above 30 MHz, including access to the two-meter band, "to ensure that these amateurs come into contact with good operators who would serve as role models."

The Canadian DOC is currently considering restructuring the Amateur Service in Canada. Ben Johnson's petition is basically the same as envisioned by the CRRL and CARF for Canadian entry level amateurs.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT "NO-CODE"?

There are all sorts of arguments for - and against - a U.S. no-code license. Does code knowledge go hand-in-hand with a better candidate for amateur radio? Does code proficiency prove anything? Would our nation be better off emphasizing modern digital techniques rather than Morse? Why should we require code proficiency as a prerequisite for amateur operation above 30 MHz when it is not an international requirement. Most new amateurs do not use the mode - nor are they required to. Should the mode be forced on newcomers? How much CW operation exists at the VHF level and higher?

Perhaps the two greatest arguments for a no code amateur class, however, are:

(1.) ...that it gets youngsters started early towards an electronic career. Japan, which has a no code class (which even includes HF operation) has more amateurs than any country in the world. They also seem to be making the most strides in high technology.

(2.) The ham bands are under great pressure from many other well-funded radio services who desperately need more spectrum. They argue that the amateur frequencies are under utilized - particularly at the VHF and higher level.

Think about it. Talk about it with your friends on their air, ...in your club bulletins ...on your packet and two-meter networks. Let us have your views - pro and con. Is it time to reconsider a no-code entry level amateur radio license? There is basically a brand new regime at the FCC ...with a new Commission chairman and a new Private Radio Bureau Chief. The time may be right. We would be willing to head up a campaign for a no code license if there is real grass roots support for it at all amateur levels.

Another point. Would you be willing to contribute to a fund, 100% of which would be used to fund a professionally conducted campaign for a no-code amateur license class - including possibly a Washington attorney? Let us hear from you.

HAM DATABASE AVAILABLE VIA PACKET

The first connection of CD-ROM (Compact Disc-Read Only Memory) to amateur packet radio took place on October 16, 1987, when the entire Buckmaster database of all U.S. amateur licensees (472,000+) went on-line.

The contact was made between Jim DeArras, WA4ONG-10, PBBS, in Richmond, Virginia, and N1BIC, Jack Speer, in Mineral, Virginia. The exchange was made between the N1BIC packet station, via W4BLD-1, to WA4ONG-10 PBBS (145.1 MHz). WA4ONG provided the multiuser PBBS and interface software. N1BIC supplied the Hitachi 1502S CD-ROM disc. The disc was prepared by another ham, K5RPX, Bill Harlow of RDSC, Inc.

The purpose of the event was to test the availability of this massive file (142+ megabytes) in a packet environment. A CD-ROM optical disc can hold over 550 megabytes of read-only data. Comments and ideas are encouraged. Other data bases of interest to hams are planned. HF PBBS operation is also being discussed. No fees of any kind are charged for this demonstration project. WA4ONG-10 is currently available 24 hours a day for testing the CD-ROM inquiry. At the PBBS prompt type: OS QTH N1BIC (return). (Info from: Jack Speer/N1BIC Tel. 703-894-5777)

U.S. - MEXICIO CONFERENCE TO BE HELD

In conjunction with the STARS Hamfest/Harlingen, Texas (held the third week in February), the ARRL and the League of Mexican Radio Experimenters (LMRE), will hold a conference aimed at improving the lines of communication between our two countries. LMRE is one of the two national ham radio organizations in Mexico.

Mr. Guillermo Nunoz, newly elected LMRE president; Jim Haney, WB5JBP, West Gulf ARRL Director; Mr. Larry Price, W4RA, ARRL president; FCC/Brownsville, Texas, officials and their Mexican counterpart will participate. Such topics as border repeater coordination and reciprocal licensing will be discussed. Hopefully the talks will result in a better working amateur radio relationship with Mexico.

● The space shuttle missions are getting closer to resuming and amateur radio is scheduled to play an increasingly larger role. The groundwork for amateur radio participation in the NASA space program was laid by astronauts Owen Garriott/W5LFL and Tony England/W4ORE. The space station operation, scheduled for 1992, will have the most complete amateur radio facilities on board that NASA has had to date.

The ARRL feels that the presence of amateur radio in the space mission projects is important for our future growth - especially among the youth of our nation. NASA has found that besides providing activities for the leisure hours of the space station crew, amateur radio can become an effective communication system backup.

● Heathkit's new Christmas 1987 catalog features a very fast 80386-based desktop computer (\$3,349.95) in kit form that runs at 16 MHz. Many options available including an 80-MB hard drive. Another new introduction is a multi-jointed Robot Arm (\$1,795) that can be hooked to a computer's RS-232 serial port. Free catalog from: Heath Co., Dept. 350-030, Benton Harbor, MI 49022.

● Kenwood has two new HF transceivers - the TS-140S (\$899.95) all band/all mode 100 watt HF transceiver with general coverage receiver and the TS-680S (\$999.95) all band/-all mode 100 watt HF transceiver including a 10 watt six meter section. New features include programmable band edge markers and Morse code beeper status indicators. All the other goodies are there too, dual digital VFOs, 30 memory channels, programmable scanning and much more.

The Association of North American Radio Clubs, a short-wave listening organization composed of many SWL clubs, has come out against the the FCC proposal to allow §Part 15 devices to operate "without restriction as to bandwidth, duty cycle, modulation technique or application ...on almost any frequency (including the HF ham bands)" so long as they stay under the proposed field strength limits. They say that these limits - even hundreds of feet away from the source - are comparable to what the BBC and VOA try to achieve in their target area. The general field strength limits proposed for 1.705 to 30 MHz is 30 uV/m at 30 feet. (Comments close on December 4th.)

● The Northern California DX Foundation has voted to provide \$1,000 plus QSL assistance to two upcoming DXpeditions. The first (scheduled Nov. 16-25) for Somalia, T5, by Hans/DK9KX and Baldur/DJ6SI ...the second, a 2-week (Feb. 1988) operation from Auckland & Campbell Islands, ZL9, by Ron/ZL1AMO, Roly/ZL1BQD and Baz/ZL1BN. NCDXF said their S. African beacon station, ZS6DN is currently off the air due to a lightning strike. NXDXF has also donated a Kenwood TS-440S transceiver to the Egyptian Radio Club in hopes of stimulating additional DX activity. The rig was used by N6TJ in the recent CQ-WW SSB DX contest for his SU1ER operation.

EXTRA CLASS QUESTION POOL SYLLABUS

The Question Pool Committee (QPC) has finished their work on the Element 4(B) Extra Class syllabus. Copies of the new Extra Class question outline have been forwarded to all VEC's and amateur radio publishers.

The next step in the review process is an evaluation of the actual Extra Class questions themselves. The syllabus is too long to publish here. Basically it is the same as the previous version. All recommended changes must be referenced to the question numbers as they are currently identified. Only Extra Class level amateurs may suggest revisions or new questions.

A new form entitled "Recommended Change to the Element 4(B) Extra Class Question Pool" was included with the 4(B) syllabus. Its use is optional. It asks for the following information.

(I.) Question submitted by, Address, Call sign, License class, Expiration date, VEC affiliation (if any) and VE #.

(II.) Question. (Limit to 240 characters.) If this is a change to an existing question, what is that question's number? If this is a new question, which subelement should it be assigned to? Syllabus topic?

(III.) Suggested Answer. (Limit to 160 characters.) Answer reference/document, Edition, Date.

(IV.) Suggested Distractors, Wrong answers. (Optional) Limit to 160 characters each. Distractor #1, Distractor #2, Distractor #3.

Your suggestions should be sent to any one of the following QPC Members. Simultaneous distribution to all three would be very much appreciated, however.

ARRL/VEC - Jim Clary, WB9IHH
225 Main Street, Newington, CT 06111

W. Carolina ARS/VEC - Ray Adams, N4BAQ
5833 Clinton Hwy., Suite 203, Knoxville, TN 37912.

Greater Los Angeles ARG/VEC - R.C. Smith,
W6RZA, 9737 Noble Ave., Sepulveda, CA 91343.

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MORE: "FM AMERICA" & KEITH LAMONICA

The November 4th issue of Satellite Times, a backyard satellite dish industry publication, tells about Keith Lamonica, 45, (W7DXX) and the demise of his FM America. He hosted his last live satellite-delivered show on October 14th and he has not been heard from since.

Lamonica had rented commercial satellite subcarrier space under the skin-flick American Extasy signal on Spacenet 1. Transponder owner, Jeff Younger of HDO (Home Dish Only - not HBO), said Lamonica's check for the frequency bounced twice in mid-October. Payments to the U.S. Satellite Corporation to whom Lamonica had signed a five year deal for uplink service were up-to-date.

Before HDO pulled the plug on FM America, Lamonica continually played a tape ...widely viewed as a farewell message to his audience. "This is a difficult announcement to make to you," said Lamonica. "But because of the apparent lack of interest on the part of TVRO consumers, FM America is forced to drop our Spacenet-1 feed until we get support to relaunch." Prior to that, Lamonica had been playing a tape in which he told listeners a "new generation" of FM America would soon be launched on another satellite in December or January. Most feel this can't happen since he now has no credit ...or credibility in the satellite delivery field.

Lamonica began his FM America on June 18, 1985 and was initially well received by the backyard dish industry and private TVRO owner. Thousands of dish owners paid \$20 each to join "The family." He fell into disfavor, however, because of his controversial and often bizarre behavior.

According to Satellite Times and Satellite Dealer, the FBI, U.S. Secret Service and the Securities and Exchange Commission have ongoing Lamonica investigations. It is believed that the FBI probe involves possession of firearms. He was found guilty in Georgia (where he served on a roadside chain gang) and Florida (where he is still wanted for probation violations) on felony bad check charges (22 counts). Convicted felons aren't supposed to

be carrying weapons. He also has a record in Colorado and Idaho.

The Salt Lake City SEC Office is looking into several complaints about "financial irregularities" surrounding the penny stock sold by Lamonica under the KMA International name. The U.S. Secret Service wants to know more about his handling of credit cards and (unaccounted for) donations to FM America (interstate fraud). At some point, federal investigators will be going to the U.S. attorney with a case.

Lamonica's antics were called to our attention a year ago when he began uplinking amateur radio communications for receipt by amateurs owning backyard satellite stations - a very questionable activity since ham transmissions were being transmitted on other than amateur spectrum. (See W5YI Report, December 1, 1986, p.10)

Lamonica, who used to be an editor for "73 Magazine", told us that what he was doing was perfectly legal and "no more complicated than a phone patch - the landline portion of which frequently goes via microwave or satellite."

FCC's Ray Kowalsi, thought otherwise however. He said he considered Lamonica's commercial uplinking of amateur radio communications "on the 'fringes'" of legality. "We have strict rules against deporting into the amateur service signals which originate from outside of it. (There is a) legal question ...about signals which began in the amateur service and went outside."

Lamonica had a commercial booth at last year's Dayton HamVention and we met him personally. We expected fireworks since after appearing on his FM America call in line one evening, we wrote that we felt his activities were very questionable. At the time we were having trouble reaching him and decided to telephone him on his "on-air-interview" line. Our conversation was satellite broadcast throughout the country. I received telephone calls from amateurs everywhere that were listening on their dishes. (Other than a cold stare, the fireworks never materialized at Dayton.) To be continued, I'm sure!

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UPDATE ON TEXAS REPEATER LAWSUIT....

In July, 1987, Dave Pease, N5DA, filed a lawsuit against the Texas VHF-FM Society, the recognized repeater coordinator in Texas, its president (now vice-president), Joe Jarrett, K5FOG, and eight other amateurs in the 191st State District Court of Dallas County, Texas. (See W5YI Report, August 1, 1987, p.10) The suit primarily surrounds activities involving amateur repeater operations.

In his petition, Mr. Pease alleged various counts of libel, slander and harassment. He asked the court for Temporary Restraining Orders, Temporary and Permanent Injunctions against the Defendants, Actual and Exemplary damages, "Pre-judgement and Post-judgement interest at the highest lawful rate," Costs of the suit, "...and such other and further relief to which he may be justified." The suit even was commented on by Wayne Green, W2NSD/1, in his August "73 Magazine" editorial.

A hearing was held on the matter of the Temporary Restraining Orders. By Order of the Court, the Texas VHF-FM Society and VP Joe Jarrett, were released from the Temporary Orders. The lawsuit, however, is still pending against them. Other defendants, Wayne Taylor/N5HNQ, Denny Irvin/NT5J, Troy Haskell Bevers/W5AVG, Billy McDonald/KC5NQ, Garland Moser/N5EWD, Chuck Schultz/N5BMU and Chris Hudgens/N5IUF (age 17), and counsel for the Plaintiff reached a new agreement where the Plaintiff, Mr. Pease, along with these defendants, would go under identical Temporary Injunctions until the time of trial.

The form of the Injunction was modified, to clarify its wording so any chance meetings the Plaintiff and Defendants may have with one another would not be considered a violation of the order. This avoided a lengthy hearing at which it is said all the parties were prepared to call a lengthy list of witnesses to testify.

Defendant Thomas Blaine Hamrick/AL7HH would not agree to the arrangement, and has petitioned the Court for reconsideration on the Temporary Restraining Order entered against him. He is also asking that

the Court order Pease to pay him "\$1,000 per day ...in compensation for (his) loss of earnings, loss of Freedom of Speech, and loss of Civil Rights" caused by the Temporary Restraining Order.

Another hearing has been set to determine if the Texas VHF-FM Society and its Vice president, Mr. Jarrett, may have a separate trial from the other defendants.

At this time, all Defendants have filed answers to the lawsuit, generally denying all the accusations made by the Plaintiff, and demanding strict proof thereof. Some indicate they intend to file countersuits for money damages against the Plaintiff. Considering the backlog of cases in this Court, another year may pass before any trial begins.

In our last issue we commented that one of the defendants, Thomas Blaine Hamrick/AL7HH had filed a Freedom of Information Act request for FCC records on him. While some records were released, others were withheld under FOIA Exemption 7(a). The main purpose of this Exemption is to protect the government from the harm that would result from premature disclosure of materials compiled in connection with pending or contemplated law enforcement proceedings.

Hamrick sent us a certified letter stating that our reporting that he was subject to FCC enforcement action would negatively affect his electronics business pursuit since he professionally deals with many amateurs. The information reported, however, is accurate, although the enforcement action against him apparently involves other than the "repeater suit" filed in State District Court.

In a Report & Order adopted October 9, 1987, the FCC released an "Index of Categories Withheld Pursuant to Exemption 7(a)". Government agencies are required to prepare an itemized index correlating each withheld document with a specific FOIA Exemption. This index indicates the withheld documents involves Hamrick's FCC licensing records. Hamrick has an amateur Advanced Class "AL7" prefix call sign reserved for Alaska. Reportedly Hamrick, who lives in Irving, Texas, has never resided in Alaska.